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Oceans and the law of the sea: sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments

Workshop to discuss implementation of paragraphs 80 and 83 to 87 of resolution 61/105 and paragraphs 117 and 119 to 127 of resolution 64/72 on sustainable fisheries, addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks

Letter dated 27 October 2011 from the Moderator of the Workshop to the President of the General Assembly

Pursuant to paragraph 128 of General Assembly resolution 64/72 of 4 December 2009, the Workshop to discuss implementation of paragraphs 80 and 83 to 87 of resolution 61/105 and paragraphs 117 and 119 to 127 of resolution 64/72 on sustainable fisheries, addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks, was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 and 16 September 2011.

In my capacity as Moderator of the Workshop, I have the honour to transmit a summary of the discussions held thereat. Pursuant to paragraph 129 of resolution 64/72, those discussions are to be taken into account by the General Assembly in its further review of the actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to paragraphs 80 and 83 to 87 of resolution 61/105 and paragraphs 117 and 119 to 127 of resolution 64/72.

I kindly request that the present letter and the summary transmitted herewith be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 76.

(*Signed*) Alice **Revell**
Moderator

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Summary by the Moderator of the discussions held at the Workshop to discuss implementation of paragraphs 80 and 83 to 87 of resolution 61/105 and paragraphs 117 and 119 to 127 of resolution 64/72 on sustainable fisheries, addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks*

1. In accordance with paragraph 128 of General Assembly resolution 64/72 of 4 December 2009, the Workshop to discuss implementation of paragraphs 80 and 83 to 87 of General Assembly resolution 61/105 and paragraphs 117 and 119 to 127 of resolution 64/72 on sustainable fisheries, addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks, was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 and 16 September 2011.

2. The Workshop was attended by representatives of 43 States, 19 intergovernmental organizations and other bodies, including regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements (RFMOs), and 12 non-governmental organizations. Ms. Alice Revell, Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations, was appointed Moderator of the Workshop.

3. In accordance with its organization of work,[1] the Workshop comprised six thematic segments, each of which was introduced by the presentations of relevant experts,[2] followed by a general discussion among participants.

Impacts of bottom fisheries on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks (segment 1)

4. In segment 1, presentations were made by: Ms. Ellen Kenchington (Bedford Institute of Oceanography, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada); Mr. Odd Aksel Bergstad (Institute of Marine Research, Norway); Ms. Merete Tandstad (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)); Ms. Karen Sack (Pew Environment Group) and Mr. Matthew Gianni (Deep Sea Conservation Coalition); and Mr. Alastair Macfarlane (International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA)).

5. Participants discussed the characteristics, status and vulnerability of deep-sea habitats and species and the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs). Although considerable efforts had been made to increase scientific knowledge on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including the cartographic and bathymetric mapping of their distribution, it was noted that gaps in knowledge still existed. The need for further research on the location and characteristics of vulnerable marine ecosystems and on the scale and impacts of bottom-fishing activities was emphasized. In particular, participants stressed the need for

* The summary is intended for reference purposes only and not as a record of the discussions.

[1] Available from www.un.org/Depts/los/reference_files/workshop_fisheries_2011.pdf.

[2] The presentations of panellists at the Workshop are available from www.un.org/Depts/los/reference_files/2011_fisheries_wrkshp_panellists.pdf.

fisheries-independent research, monitoring, recovery studies and stock assessments. It was noted that the cost of research could be a barrier, especially in the high seas and for developing countries. Difficulties in distinguishing data on deep-sea catches for the high seas were also emphasized, as these data were usually not reported separately from data on catches within exclusive economic zones.

6. Participants noted that deep-sea catches were declining in some areas and it was opined that expansion of bottom fishing into deeper waters was unlikely owing to a variety of factors, including gear limitations. Several participants stressed that damage to vulnerable marine ecosystems and the depletion of fish stocks were already evident and that recovery in some cases would take decades, if not longer. Participants discussed trade-offs and the relative value of bottom fishing in light of environmental concerns and economic returns, and the spatial impact of bottom-fishing activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction. It was noted that technological advances in fishing gear and practices, as well as the use of predictive modelling to identify vulnerable marine ecosystems, could help to reduce the impacts of bottom-fishing activities. The important role of the fishing industry in ensuring food security was emphasized and the industry's interest in maintaining consumer confidence was noted.

7. Participants drew attention to the need for effective conservation and management measures to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and ensure the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks. Challenges in adopting measures to reduce the catch of target and non-target species were highlighted. In this context, participants also discussed the applicability of coastal States measures in the regulation of deep-sea stocks in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

8. Many participants noted that considerable progress had been made by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 61/105 and 64/72, including the establishment of new regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and the adoption of measures by regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements that limit bottom-fishing activities to existing fishing areas. Significant work had also been undertaken by FAO. It was generally recognized, however, that further actions were needed to fully implement the resolutions and the 2008 International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.[3]

9. Many participants expressed the view that, if fully implemented, the resolutions and the Guidelines would provide the tools necessary for protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems from significant adverse impacts due to bottom fishing and ensuring the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks. Several participants noted specific challenges, including gaps in scientific knowledge, the need for technical assistance, and resource constraints, as well as shortcomings in implementation, in particular regarding impact assessments, area closures and encounters with VMEs. It was suggested that the cumulative impacts of fishing activities were not sufficiently taken into account in impact assessments. Some

[3] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the Technical Consultation on International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas, Rome, 4-8 February and 25-29 August 2008*, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 881 (FIEP/R881 (Tri)), appendix F.

participants indicated that encounters with dead structural organisms, such as dead corals, should be considered in VME encounter protocols. Challenges were also noted in identifying encounters with VMEs and in measuring negative impacts on rare species.

10. The need for precautionary (not reactionary) measures, in particular area closures, was also emphasized. The view was expressed that States should not authorize bottom-fishing activities until proper regulatory measures were in place to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and ensure the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks. The need to respect the sovereign rights of coastal States over the continental shelf in the conduct of bottom-fishing activities and marine scientific research was also emphasized.

11. The impacts of resolutions 61/105 and 64/72 on the actions taken by States, regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and industry operators were highlighted. Participants discussed the need for both policy guidance and technical assistance, but divergent views were expressed on the role of the General Assembly in the consideration of these issues. Some participants supported further review of the implementation of the resolutions by the Assembly, given the need for globally coherent policy guidance, the cross-cutting nature of the issues and the range of interests affected. Other participants emphasized that regulation was becoming increasingly technical and should be undertaken by specialized entities, such as FAO and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements. Several participants suggested that further review of the implementation of the resolutions should be conducted by FAO, given the technical nature of the discussions, and that FAO should facilitate discussions on future actions among States, regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and relevant industry groups.

Experience of States in addressing the impacts of bottom fisheries on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks (segment 2)

12. In segment 2, many States described actions that had been taken to implement the relevant paragraphs of resolutions 61/105 and 64/72. A presentation was made by Mr. John Brincat (European Commission) on the experience of the European Union in addressing impacts of bottom fisheries. Some States indicated that they either did not authorize or did not engage in bottom fishing in areas beyond national jurisdiction. A number of States stressed the importance of implementing the resolutions within areas of national jurisdiction and described actions that had been taken within their exclusive economic zones, including the closure of areas to bottom fisheries.

13. It was generally recognized that progress had been made by States, individually and through regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, in implementing the resolutions. Particular attention was drawn to the adoption of measures relating to area closures, impact assessments, mandatory observer coverage, and encounter protocols. Participants highlighted the importance of adopting measures based on the best available scientific information, as well as the need to apply precautionary and ecosystem approaches. Participants also provided information on specific measures taken to ensure the long-term

sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks, including gear restrictions, limits on fishing capacity, data collection and monitoring and control.

14. Some participants provided specific information on measures that had been adopted to implement resolutions 61/105 and 64/72 in areas where no competent regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements existed. Efforts to conduct scientific research in these areas were highlighted, including actions taken to unilaterally close areas to bottom-fishing activities following the identification of areas containing vulnerable marine ecosystems through seabed-mapping programmes. Information was also provided on interim measures that had been adopted by participants in negotiations to establish new regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements to regulate bottom-fishing activities. Some participants called for the early entry into force of the instruments for establishing them, in particular in the Southern Indian Ocean, the South Pacific Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean. Other gaps in regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements coverage were highlighted, including in the South-West Atlantic Ocean and, in this regard, participants emphasized the need for States to cooperate, in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[4]

15. Many participants stressed that, despite the progress achieved, further efforts were needed to fully implement the resolutions. Some participants expressed concerns over the slow pace of implementation of the resolutions. It was generally recognized that there was a need for further scientific information and data on the location and characteristics of vulnerable marine ecosystems, including clear definitions of those ecosystems. In this context, participants discussed possible adverse impacts to VMEs during survey or exploratory activities and the relative costs and benefits of such activities. Some participants highlighted the utility of predictive modelling in determining the spatial pattern of VMEs, while other participants noted the need to verify such modelling exercises.

16. Challenges in the application of encounter protocols and "move-on rules" were highlighted, including threshold levels that were too high in triggering encounters with vulnerable marine ecosystems and move-on distances that were arbitrary. Difficulties in respect of identifying the location of VMEs and the absence of reporting were also noted. In addition, problems were observed in respect of the attempt to apply the same criteria in different regions. Many participants stressed that, given the length of some bottom-fishing tows, move-on rules did not provide adequate protection for VMEs, in particular in new fishing areas. It was suggested by some participants that encounter protocols should be limited to existing fishing areas and that threshold levels should be reduced. The need to take into account differences in regional features and taxa in the development and application of these management tools was emphasized.

17. Some participants described challenges in adopting measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks. Participants noted, in particular, difficulties in determining sustainable levels of fishing effort, as well as high levels of by-catch and discards in certain fisheries. The vulnerability of some stocks to fishing was also noted. Participants highlighted challenges stemming from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and shared information on vessels that

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.

had been engaged in bottom fishing when the flag State could not be determined. Some participants suggested that bottom fishing in contravention of the General Assembly resolutions should be considered IUU fishing. A number of participants also highlighted concerns over the use of harmful subsidies, which encouraged continued engagement in bottom fishing where it would not otherwise be economic.

18. Some participants highlighted difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of recently adopted measures to implement the resolutions, including lack of data and scientific information. In this regard, the need for technical support for achieving adequate implementation of the FAO Guidelines was emphasized. Some participants stressed the need for time to study the effectiveness of adopted measures, while other participants indicated that reviews would be conducted on the basis of experience already gained, as well as developments in international forums.

Experience of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in addressing the impacts of bottom fisheries on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks (segment 3)

19. In segment 3, presentations were made by: Mr. Andrew Wright (Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)); Mr. Stefán Ásmundsson (North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)), Mr. Vladimir Shibanov (Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)); Mr. Shingo Ota (Interim Secretariat for the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean (NPFC)); Ms. Karen Sack (Pew Environment Group) and Mr. Matthew Gianni (Deep Sea Conservation Coalition); and Mr. Ross Shotton (Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association (SIODFA)).

20. Representatives of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements provided information on measures that had been taken to implement resolutions 61/105 and 64/72, including impact assessments, identification of vulnerable marine ecosystems, area closures and encounter protocols, as well as fisheries management measures, such as catch, fishing effort and gear limits. In some RFMOs, the regulated area had been divided into new and existing fishing areas, and closures had been put in place where bottom fishing was not allowed. New areas had been effectively closed and were subject to impact assessments before fishing activities could be carried out. Efforts to identify VMEs within existing fishing areas were also ongoing. In some RFMOs, the assessment of the impact of bottom fishing in existing fishing areas had been conducted by the organization and not by individual States. Information was also provided to clarify how the cumulative impact of bottom-fishing activities had been taken into account in the encounter protocol of one RFMO.

21. Many participants welcomed the progress that had been made by regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in the implementation of the resolutions.[5] Several participants emphasized the important role of RFMOs in the

[5] The South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) was not present at the Workshop and could not respond to remarks regarding management in the area of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Fishery Resources in the South-East Atlantic Ocean (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2221, No. 39489).

management of bottom fisheries and in the implementation of resolutions 61/105 and 64/72. Some participants stressed that RFMOs offered the most appropriate forums within which to address these issues, since they held the mandate to set legally binding measures and were already accepted by the fishing industry, which made compliance more likely. Other participants noted that the language of the resolutions had assisted States and RFMOs in addressing these issues and indicated that future work by the General Assembly could also be useful.

22. It was generally recognized that, to fully implement the resolutions, further efforts were needed in regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements. Information was presented on the sufficiency of the measures that had been adopted by RFMOs, including with regard to impact assessments, area closures, encounter protocols and the sustainability of fish stocks. Challenges faced by RFMOs in the implementation of the resolutions were also noted, including lack of scientific information and data, the costs of research activities and the need for greater clarity in definitions and terminology (for example, in respect of what constitutes a VME or a significant adverse impact and in respect of which species are VME indicators).

23. It was suggested that some regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements had been more effective than others in the implementation of the resolutions. Some participants noted differences in the mandates and objectives of RFMOs. It was noted, in particular, that the principal objective of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources[6] was conservation — including rational use — and that it was unique in being part of the Antarctic Treaty System. Efforts by other RFMOs to modernize, including in response to resolutions 61/105 and 64/72, were also highlighted. Some participants urged RFMOs to modernize their mandates and focus more on conservation. It was noted that some RFMOs were already reviewing the measures that had been taken to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems in light of existing experience and lessons learned.

24. Some participants indicated that implementation of the resolutions was an ongoing gradual process. Other participants emphasized, however, that some of the commitments contained in resolutions 61/105 and 64/72 reflected long-standing obligations already found in existing international instruments, including the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks,[7] as well as in Agenda 21[8] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation").[9]

25. Several participants stressed the need for transparency in the actions taken by regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements with respect to conducting impact assessments, identifying VMEs and adopting and implementing

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1329, No. 22301.

[7] Ibid., vol. 2167, No. 37924.

[8] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[9] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

measures to ensure the protection of VMEs. Some participants questioned the comprehensiveness of impact assessments and emphasized the need for RFMOs to make their activities more publicly available and for assessments to be conducted more frequently or on a regular basis. The need to ensure the confidentiality of commercially sensitive data was highlighted, as well as the need to ensure that assessments were properly conducted. It was suggested that the fishing industry would be motivated to produce fisheries information and data in some RFMOs, if doing so would enable new fishing areas to open.

26. Some participants provided information on the actions taken by industry organizations to regulate fisheries and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems in areas where regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements did not exist, including impact assessments, fishing effort and data collection. The role of self-regulation in the fishing industry was noted, although it was emphasized that legally binding regulations were the preferred option. Participants also discussed the need for appropriate incentives for improvement by the fishing industry of compliance with conservation and management measures, such as through the provision of secure fishing rights. Some participants also highlighted the role of consumers in promoting sustainable practices in the fishing industry.

Experience of States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in cooperating to collect and exchange scientific and technical data and information and develop or strengthen data-collection standards, procedures and protocols and research programmes (segment 4)

27. During segment 4, presentations were made by: Mr. Luis López Abellán (Centro Oceanográfico de Canarias, Instituto Español de Oceanografía, Spain); Mr. Pascal Lorance (French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea, France); Mr. Robert J. Brock (National Marine Protected Areas Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States of America); Mr. Vladimir Shibanov, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO); and Mr. Shingo Ota (NPFC).

28. Information was provided on current efforts to develop standards, procedures and protocols for the identification of vulnerable marine ecosystems, including rugosity analysis and fishing activity incident analysis, as well as the use of, and constraints on, the projection of predictive models from study areas to more extensive areas. Participants also discussed current data and research programmes, including the use of certain data sources for fisheries assessment and management, such as vessel monitoring systems, video surveys, haul-by-haul catch and onboard vessel observations. Current approaches to enhancing cooperation on scientific data and information exchange and the strengthening of data standards were also highlighted. Some participants noted that partnerships between fishers and scientists could be useful in providing commercial data from fishing vessels for scientific purposes.

29. Information was also provided on the experiences of some regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in data collection and exchange and the dissemination of scientific and technical data and information, including the exchange of best practices and the development of regional standards and

procedures. The view was expressed that data collection should not be conducted primarily by fishing vessels, since fishing gear was not designed for sampling or retaining VME indicator species and ultimately had the potential to adversely impact VMEs. Difficulties in identifying and protecting VMEs through encounter protocols and move-on rules were emphasized. It was suggested that encounter protocols should be applied only in heavily fished areas and that new areas should be subject to full impact assessments, including through video surveys and predictive modelling. The importance of observer coverage and the need to validate data through video monitoring and analysis was noted.

30. Challenges in conducting high-quality science in areas beyond national jurisdiction were discussed, including the high costs of research and the need to prioritize research. The important roles of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and the fishing industry in collecting fisheries data were emphasized. Some participants suggested that there was a need to reconcile different approaches to the management of benthic communities, namely, the one based on absolute protection of all benthic communities and the other based on protection only of representative habitats.

Experience of developing States in addressing the impacts of bottom fisheries on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks (segment 5)

31. In segment 5, presentations were made by: Mr. Osvaldo Urrutia (Subsecretaria de Pesca, Chile); Mr. Mario Aguilar (Comisión Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca, Mexico); Mr. Robert J. Brock (NOAA); and Mr. Andrew Wright (CCAMLR).

32. Several participants described actions that had been taken by developing States to implement the relevant paragraphs of resolutions 61/105 and 64/72 in areas within national jurisdiction, including impact assessments, mapping, area closures, gear restrictions and the development of research programmes. It was emphasized that few developing countries actually engaged in bottom fishing in areas beyond national jurisdiction, as most lacked the necessary capacity, resources, expertise and access to scientific information. The need for increased capacity-building, technical and financial assistance and transfer of technology was thus emphasized. Participants highlighted, in particular, the need to facilitate the participation of developing countries in high-seas fisheries and in regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, in conformity with international law and consistent with the duty to ensure the conservation and management of those resources. The need for cooperation and full transparency was also highlighted.

33. Participants described particular challenges faced by developing countries in the implementation of resolutions 61/105 and 64/72 and the FAO Guidelines, including in conducting impact assessments, identifying and mapping vulnerable marine ecosystems, developing site-specific scientific information, training observers and ensuring compliance with measures. It was emphasized that the resolutions could create obstacles for the development of new fisheries by developing countries. Reference was made to the recommendations of the FAO Expert Workshop on the Implementation of the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas: Challenges and Ways Forward, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 10 to 12 May 2010. It was suggested that

these challenges should be taken into account by the General Assembly during its review of the implementation of its resolutions.

34. Some participants discussed the need for improvements in the regulation of fisheries and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems by developing States. It was emphasized that ensuring the protection of VMEs should not develop along two different tracks and that all States had a responsibility to implement the resolutions. Issues relating to the development of transparent measures, the role of markets and the importance of science were discussed in this context. Participants also emphasized the importance of establishing financial and technical partnerships among States, regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and other stakeholders in order to enhance cooperation and develop effective implementation strategies.

35. A number of participants provided information on capacity-building activities, including the provision of research vessels and technical training. It was suggested that a trust fund should be established to assist developing States in undertaking impact assessments required by the resolutions. Some participants also raised the possibility of granting fishing allocations to new developing-country members of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements. Reference was also made to the Assistance Fund established under Part VII of the Fish Stocks Agreement.

36. Information was presented on the activities undertaken by regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements with a view to providing assistance to developing States, including through scientific scholarships, internship programmes and capacity-building workshops. Additional means of assistance to developing States were described, including reductions in assessed contributions, guaranteed participation in meetings and direct development initiatives.

FAO Programme for Deep-sea High Seas Fisheries (segment 6)

37. During segment 6, a presentation was made by Ms. Jessica Sanders (FAO) and Ms. Merete Tandstad (FAO) on the FAO Programme for Deep-sea High Seas Fisheries, which was aimed at assisting States, specifically developing countries, institutions and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in the implementation of the FAO Guidelines. It was noted that the overarching goal of the FAO Programme was to ensure the sustainable use of living marine resources and the protection of marine biodiversity. Information was provided on issues relating to implementation of the FAO Guidelines, including the recommendations of the 2010 Workshop held in Busan, Republic of Korea (see para. 33 above).

38. The components of the FAO Programme were described in detail, including the development of best practices and support tools for the implementation of the FAO Guidelines, area-specific demonstration activities, and global coordination, monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of information. It was noted that FAO was organizing a workshop on the vulnerable marine ecosystem database to be held in December 2011 and that the database would focus on VMEs that had been designated by management authorities. Information was also provided on the current activities of FAO, including the development of a web space on deep-sea issues, species identification guides and a manual on data collection, as well as the organization of regional workshops. It was noted that a new programme was being

developed by FAO, in cooperation with the Global Environment Facility, to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in areas beyond national jurisdiction in accordance with agreed global targets.

39. Participants highlighted the important role of FAO in the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions and the FAO Guidelines. The need for priority in the provision of technical assistance to developing States in relation to bottom fisheries was emphasized. Some participants also stressed the need for transparency and inclusiveness in the convening of FAO meetings and workshops. Support for the work of FAO in the development of the vulnerable marine ecosystem database was highlighted and it was suggested that the database should also include information on areas where VMEs were not located. Participants were also encouraged to submit to FAO their list of vessels authorized to fish in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

40. A question was raised regarding whether there was any mandate of FAO concerning marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. It was suggested that programmes of FAO should reflect the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group of the General Assembly to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Clarificatory information was provided that indicated that the FAO/Global Environment Facility programme was being developed with other partners that were addressing complementary issues relating to marine biodiversity.

Summary segment

41. During the summary segment, participants noted the usefulness of the Workshop and expressed their gratitude to the Moderator, and to the panellists for the high quality of their presentations. Appreciation was also expressed to the United Nations Secretariat, in particular to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs, for the high standard of secretariat services and assistance provided during the planning and organization of the Workshop.